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Committee for Programme and Coordination
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Agenda item 7
Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-fourth session

Draft report

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Addendum

Programme questions: programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 2012-2013

(*Item 3 (a)*)

Report of the Secretary-General on programme performance for the biennium 2012-2013

1. At its 3rd and 5th meetings, on 2 and 3 June 2014, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 2012-2013 (A/69/144).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the programme performance report and responded to questions raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

3. Some delegations expressed their appreciation for the report and noted with satisfaction its added value and usefulness in informing the budgetary and planning process. Delegations indicated that the programme performance report constituted an important management and accountability tool. Other delegations noted that the report would be more useful if the narrative part could be reduced and more emphasis were placed on results and impact rather than outputs. One delegation opined that any format changes by the Secretariat to the report would require an express mandate given by the General Assembly in a resolution.

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4. The Secretariat was commended for achieving an output implementation rate of 91 per cent for mandated outputs, which is one percentage point higher than in the previous biennium. A view was expressed that the presentation of information in chapter 3 had improved, although more explanation was requested on the formulas used to calculate different implementation rates and the difference between quantifiable and non-quantifiable outputs.

5. Concern was expressed about the low implementation rates of safety and security, disarmament and public information programmes and the high rate of additional programmatic outputs of the human rights programme. A view was expressed that programmes should operate strictly on the basis of mandated outputs according to the approved programme budget.

6. It was noted that the rate of terminations of outputs owing to vacancies had decreased. The Secretariat was asked what measures had been taken to guarantee a low vacancy rate and minimize its impact on performance. In addition, a general question was raised on common reasons for terminations in 2012-2013 and on the effect of those terminations on the biennial programme performance. An inquiry was also made regarding the specific legislative document used by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to justify the termination of its outputs owing to legislative reasons.

7. While reviewing the accomplishments of the individual programmes, a view was expressed that along with the revisions to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, the work performed by the Department of Management in 2012-2013 on the proposed revisions to the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation should also have been referenced in the report under the common support services programme.

8. Several delegations emphasized that in the assessment of expected accomplishments contained in the programme performance report, reference was made to the proposal of the Secretary-General on the paper-smart concept. Delegations reminded the Secretariat that the concept was being implemented on a trial basis and that no specific mandate had been given to the Secretariat by the General Assembly to fully implement the paper-smart initiative.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. **The Committee stressed the importance of the Secretariat using programme performance reports as a management tool in the strategic framework planning process, in line with the principles of results-based management, including by regularly reviewing programme performance.**

10. **The Committee noted the information provided in the report regarding the strains on some programme budgets and recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to continue to provide information on their impact on programme implementation in future reports.**

11. **The Committee noted that the report did not contain information requested by the General Assembly, upon its recommendation, on the impact of the reduction in the number of printed documents on the intergovernmental decision-making process in United Nations conferences and meetings. It therefore recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-**

General to pursue the full implementation of the decision in future programme performance reports.

12. **The Committee noted the information provided on the delivery of paper-smart services to several meetings, including high-level meetings. In that context, it recalled that the implementation of the paper-smart concept was on a pilot basis, as decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/233.**

13. **In addition, with the purpose of improving the presentation of the report, the Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to include in future reports, under each section of the programme, the following information:**

(a) **A comparison with the previous biennium of the rate of implementation of mandated outputs;**

(b) **A comparison with the previous biennium of additional outputs implemented at the initiative of the Secretariat;**

(c) **Information on the main factors affecting the implementation of mandated outputs, when the rate of implementation for the biennium was below 90 per cent.**